

**Notes from Newmarket Racecourses Bookmaker Liaison Committee Meeting Monday 26<sup>th</sup> March 2018**

Attendees

Amy Starkey – Regional Director, The Jockey Club  
Margo Walsh – Operations Manager, Newmarket  
Dickon White – Group Betting Director – The Jockey Club  
Neil Pateman – Betting Ring Manager, AGT  
Mike Armes – Bookmaker  
Steve Andrews – Bookmaker  
John Christie – Bookmaker  
Arthur Mulgrew – Bookmaker  
Ed Thompson – Bookmaker  
Colin Wadey - Bookmaker

Apologies:

Simon Barham – Bookmaker  
Michael Cannon - Bookmaker

Welcome & Introductions

DW welcomed all to the first BLC at Newmarket. He encouraged all attendees to participate in the meeting, and that notes would be produced and circulated to all. Once these were approved, the notes would be posted onto the AGT website. DW also outlined the importance of on-course bookmakers to all JCR courses, and wanted to continue to build on the relationships that had been created.

AS informed the meeting of two Newmarket staff members who were important for bookmakers to know but were not at the meeting, these were Sophie Able (General Manager) and Gemma Steve (Head of Operations, East Region). Gemma was currently on maternity leave.

2017 Review of Trading – Newmarket only

MA opened the review of trading by stating that the 2000 Guineas Saturday in 2017 saw good business but that the 1000 Guineas on the Sunday struggled due to it not being followed by a Bank Holiday. He has RM, Tattersalls 19 and only attends on key days. He followed by stating that on the July Course the Saturdays held up well although with Tattersalls 1 he was aware that view might not be shared throughout the ring. Friday evenings were dependent on the band playing. The July Festival was good on Thursday and Saturday, but slightly disappointing on the Friday.

AS responded by outlining that there was target for growth on the Rowley Mile and Capital Plans had been developed. There would be a Free Community day on the Thursday of the Craven meeting in 2018. AS also addressed the Friday of the July meeting by stating that it would be re-branded “Feel good Friday” with live fashions shows, etc. on the day. Gok Wan would also be involved on the day. AS also stated that the Town Plate would be moved to the fixture on the 25<sup>th</sup> August.

ET reported that the Rowley Mile had always been a challenge for the bookmakers. The Friday of the Dubai Champions Festival was positive as many racegoers had been given free tickets from previous racedays. He asked if there was any changes planned to the July Cup meeting? AS also stated that they were in discussions with Greene King over bringing racegoers to the Dubai Champions Festival.

JC stated that the 3-day July Festival was improving but that the Friday evening had declined over past couple of seasons. He appreciated that there was lots of competitions with acts, music, etc. AS responded by outlining that 2015 had been the record year for Newmarket. JC also queried the standard of racing over the past 2/3 years on Friday evenings. The 2000 Guineas in 2017 had been good but poor in the previous 2 or 3 years. JC also requested additional security/police due to some

challenging behaviour from racegoers near to the Rails. AS added that they had created additional distance between Rails and Tattersalls pitches which would hopefully help.

CW opened by discussing the Guineas Sunday, and querying why admission prices were so high in 2017. He also commented on the Thursday evening as he does not attend these fixtures but was there any possibility of these being moved. He also encountered some issues with wifi at the Craven fixture last year.

ET queried whether police officers were actually on duty at the Rowley Mile. He regularly encountered football chanting which was creating a tense atmosphere. AS outlined that they had 22 cameras on the Rowley Mile managing and maintaining the crowds. She added that the World Cup in 2018 would be shown on the screens around the site but would not be promoted by the racecourse.

SA asked how successful The Champions Lawn had been, AS responded by outlining that she was pleased with this facility, and that it has been a great success.

### 2018 Plans

AS presented with MW the exciting plans that Newmarket had for 2018 at both the Rowley Mile and the July Course.

AS outlined the different music acts that had been scheduled on the July Courses and updated the committee on current sales.

JC queried the loud PA noise and could this be addressed. He said that it was too loud at many racecourses!

AS outlined the plans for Guineas TV that would also be utilised at feature meetings and Friday evenings. There was an opportunity for a representative from the ring to be interviewed to promote on-course bookmakers.

### Bookmaker Access/Car Parking

All agreed that bookmaker access and car parking at Newmarket was good. Bookmakers would once again be supplied with a "B" car park label. AS asked that kit should all be brought through the "bookmakers' entrance" to avoid unnecessary damage.

MW added that kit could be dropped off by vehicles 2 ½ hours before racing and 3 hours before Festival meetings.

### Bookmaker Numbers & Rings

NP distributed the bookmaker numbers within each ring from 2017, in comparison to 2016.

DW outlined that JCR would be reviewing bookmaker numbers at each ring over the next few months. No changes would be made without consultation with the BLC's.

The committee also discussed New Betting Areas at Newmarket and the potential of opening a NBA on the July Course within the Aphrodite enclosure. There was a general view that this would be positive for both bookmakers and the racecourse, however DW & AS agreed that they would produce a paper to be distributed to the committee for their thoughts. DW stated if a NBA was created then replenishment would take place. However, JC stated he did not agree with any replenishment such as this. DW, on behalf of JCR, felt that this new betting area would have no impact on the main betting areas and without replenishment then the NBA would not be opened. AS also outlined that she felt that the Millennium Grandstand was a potential showcase opportunity for on-course bookmakers.

### Daily Betting Badges

There was an appetite for DBB's to be made available for online purchasing for bookmakers at Newmarket but the JCR IT system was still being developed to allow this to happen.

#### Marketing Fees/Promoting the On-Course Market

DW outlined that he was keen to support all JCR courses in assisting with the promotion of the on-course market. Big screens, racecards and CCTV could easily be utilised to support.

MA asked about the racecourse wifi and the number of betting partners. A number of partners had signed up to the Newmarket wifi and a maximum of 10 would be allowed. MA was also concerned the easy availability of online betting in the ring for racegoers was detrimental to the racecourse bookmakers with loss of turnover.

#### Role of the BRM's

DW outlined the importance of the BRM team at Newmarket (and all JCR courses). No aggression or rudeness to BRM's would be accepted.

#### Think 21/under 18 Gambling

As at previous BLC's, DW outlined the importance of bookmakers, in conjunction with racecourses, of dealing with under 18 gambling. The local authorities and the Gambling Commission would be carrying out test purchasing on racedays and all needed to be aware. Better signage and management of under 18 betting needed to be delivered.

#### Health & Safety in the Betting Rings

No major issues at Newmarket although the requirement to keep pitches tidy was paramount. MW outlined the importance of ensuring that all equipment brought onto the racecourse needed to be PAT tested.

#### AOB

##### Pitch Renting

DW stated that JCR in conjunction with AGT would again be looking at possible pitch renting activity. The previous investigation that was carried out was deemed to be a success but a follow-up was required.

##### Each Way Betting Terms

DW outlined that a fellow bookmaker had sent a proposal to AGT and JCR requesting for the standard EW terms to be reviewed. He wished to offer an additional place (this could be done under the existing terms) but with an additional fraction being offered (1/5, not ¼). DW's view was he needed to get additional support from the associations before this could be implemented.

##### Britbet

DW outlined the plans for Britbet (replacement to Totepool) from July onwards. He assured bookmakers that retailing bets would not take place within betting rings, and that the bookmakers' licence gave them additional assurances relating to pool betting.

MA raised the point that on Friday evenings on the July Course many racegoers remain in the car parks during some of the early racing and was there any way to incentivise them to come into the course earlier?

ET commented on bookmakers' attire and wondered whether a dress code could be considered. Some bookmakers were not dressed appropriately. This was covered in Special Conditions E and stated that bookmakers needed to be dressed in a manner according to the enclosure they were betting within.

NP queried the location of the screen in the Family Enclosure on the July Course. This was having an impact on some betting positions. MW agreed to review with NP.